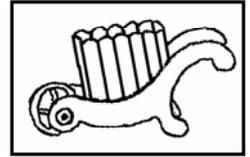




Number 84

Salty Comments

Facts and Opinion about Open Salt Collecting



September 2003

Canadian and British Books

We recently bought the book “Canadian Handbook of Pressed Glass Tableware” by Peter and Barbara Sutton-Smith, and have tried to see what we can learn about salts from it. The book lists about 200 patterns of tableware, and cites the basis for believing them Canadian. It also lists the U.S. factories known to have made the same pattern. A few of their attributions come from old catalogs, but many are the result of archeological digs at the sites of old Canadian glass works. The shards they found show what patterns were produced there. It is not clear how they decided on the shapes produced – we guess they copied the U.S. lists for the pattern or asked Canadian collectors what shapes they owned.

The first impression we got from the list of patterns was that they are mostly copies of ones made in the United States. Such copying would not be tolerated these days, but in the latter half of the 19th century the glass industry was protected by tariffs. Goods coming into Canada were taxed at 30% of their value, and those coming into the United States incurred a similar tax. Under these conditions, a manufacturer in the U.S. would have nothing to lose if someone in Canada duplicated his designs. He couldn't afford to send his wares to that country because of the tariff situation, and Canadians couldn't compete by sending their output to us, so copying didn't rob him of any customers. Of course the copying could have gone both ways – a Canadian factory may have been first with some patterns.

Of the 200 plus designs shown in the book, we found 40 that listed salts. These were the open salts we love, because shakers were clearly identified. Familiar patterns like BLEEDING HEART, BUCKLE, and PICKET were immediately obvious. The salts were specified as Individual (8 items), Footed (21 items) or just Salts (11 items), with some patterns having several shapes. We assume the Salts category refers to oval, round or rectangular ones with flat bottoms. Each of these pattern lists mentioned the corresponding American makers and specified the shapes available. How the shape information was obtained is unclear. They did show a picture of one salt whose shards were found in milk glass and blue milk “colours” – the FISHSCALE pattern. They did not specify what kind of dish was represented by the other colors they found – amber, blue, and yellow.

There was one design that appears to be pure Canada. Their NEWCASTLE pattern, known to us as SPRADDLE LEGS, does not appear in any of our U.S. pattern glass books. The Canadian book shows pictures of several salts.. If you haven't found one yet, keep your eyes open. They are uncommon but not rare, and it is nice to have a Canadian piece in the collection. Interestingly, Heacock & Johnson says it is English, but gives not pattern name and no reason for the attribution (H&J 2931).



FISHSCALE



*NEWCASTLE
(SPRADDLE LEGS)*

Of the 40 items where salts were listed, there were 7 where no U.S. factory was mentioned. These are:

1883 Pattern – Individual Size

GEDDES - Footed

LILY OF THE VALLEY– Footed Covered

PALMETTE– Footed and Individual Size

SUNKEN BULLSEYE – Salt

SUNBURST – Individual Size

NEWCASTLE– Individual Size

Close examination has led us to conclude that their 1883 pattern is the same as BAGWARE by Duncan. The GEDDES pattern matches the BOSWORTH (STAR BAND) pattern of the Indiana Glass Co. Our previous research showed that LILY OF THE VALLY was also made by Richards and Hartley (shown in an old catalog, see SC-#48). We have PALMETTE and SUNKEN BULLSEYE salts but not SUNBURST in our collection. The NEWCASTLE we covered on the last page. Maybe future research will uncover a U.S. source where one or more of these patterns were produced.

One design we are guessing at is their COLONIAL pattern. They list “Individual” and “Footed and Handled” salts, but give no idea what they look like. The fine print says the design was also made by Jefferson Glass, and some pieces are marked “Krystol”. We have 2 salts with this marking, and they seem to fit with the COLONIAL pieces pictured in the book. Obviously we don’t have Canadian salts because these two are marked, so maybe our guess is wrong.

Most of the Canadian patterns had the same design and name as their U.S. counterparts, but a few names are different, which is not surprising. Here are the ones (with salts) that we found:

Canadian

1883

GEDDES

CANADIAN THISTLE

JUBILEE

PEERLESS

U.S.

BAGWARE

BOSWORTH, STAR BAND

PANELED THISTLE

HICKMAN

LADY HAMILTON

	
1883 (BAGWARE)	GEDDES (BOSWORTH, STAR BAND)
	
LILY-OF-THE-VALLEY	PALMETTE (Pattern on bottom)
	
SUNKEN BULLSEYE	SUNBURST Goblet (Salt = ???)
	
COLONIAL?	COLONIAL?

At the same time, there are 12 patterns which have salts in the U.S. but where no salts appear on the Canadian list. These are:

BOWTIE	BUTTON ARCHES	CANE	LATE BUCKLE
JUBILEE (HICKMAN)	PLEAT & PANEL	SAWTOOTH	SENECA LOOP
SUNBURST MEDALLION	THOUSAND EYE	TREE OF LIFE	WILDFLOWER

It would be interesting to take some of our U.S. salts to Canada and compare them with their Canadian cousins. Perhaps we could find subtle differences to let us tell one from the other. If there are no differences, we would guess that they swapped molds back and forth. If you ever get a chance to make comparisons with a Canadian friend, be sure to tell us what you find out.

A second book that shows foreign salts is “Collectible Glass, Book 4” by Wallace Homestead Book Co. It shows the collection of Cyril C. Manley, of Quarry Bank, Brierley Hill, England. He has studied glassmaking for years, and has examined factory records and library information on the subject. The pictures show over 70 salts, both pressed and freehand. As with the Canadian book, we have a few of the salts in our collection that may be either British or American.

Although Manley does not identify specific factories for individual dishes, his collection includes pressed salts from the Sowerby, Davidson and Greener factories. Some of these have the factory mark – a peacock for Sowerby, a lion rampant facing left for Davidson, and a similar lion facing right for Greener. We have the green slag one they show with a Sowerby mark. We have the Greener mine car in blue, but it has a registry number instead of the factory mark. This mark dates it as 1893. We have a blue wheelbarrow that matches it, although the book does not show one

A second salt with a registry mark is vaseline with an opalescent rim – this is the CHIPPENDALE pattern by Davidson, and dates to 1891.. We have two unmarked ones that match the book – a black glass cauldron (really deep cobalt in sunlight) and a rectangular box in purple slag. This latter is one of the first salts that we bought, a birthday present for Kay in 1970. This was almost 10 years before we knew we were collecting open salts.

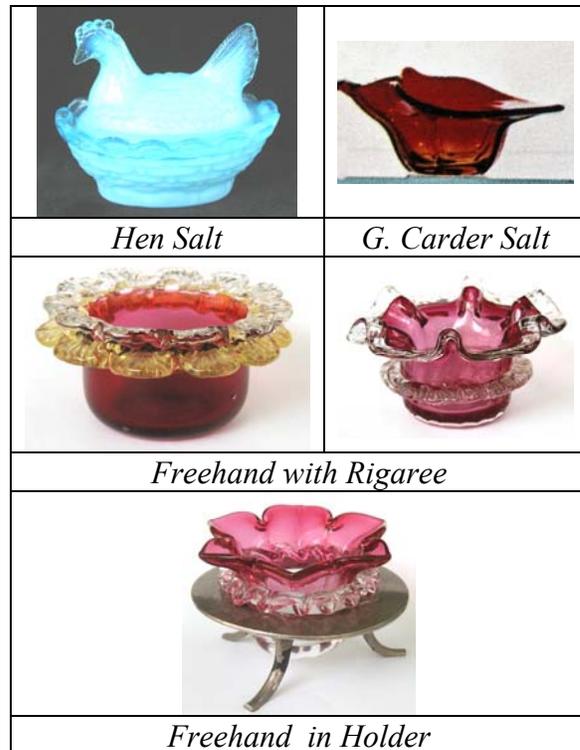


There are several pressed glass salts illustrated that give us identification problems. The first is a blue pedestal dish with a square bowl. We have a milk glass one that looks just like it, shown at the right, but ours has the word “Portieux” embossed inside. Perhaps the illustration we see is so small that the differences don’t show, or maybe it was made in both England and France. A second problem salt is a blue milk rectangular one on a scalloped base. This matches exactly the lid that Westmoreland produced for their sugar bowl/mustard jar. Here our problem is complicated by fact that we own both a complete mustard jar and a separate “lid salt”. The separate “salt” has the numeral “2” embossed on the inside, while the jar cover has nothing. Is it possible that we have a British one? Is it possible that an American piece got into Manley’s glass collection?



Another conflict is with one of our pressed master salts. The one shown at the right matches the Gillinder #3 Square Pillar Salt in an old catalog. It also matches a vaseline one in the Manley collection. Might this be like the U.S – Canada situation where the same shape was made in both places?

The hen on nest at the right is listed with the comment, “One of a few covered salts made in England. The pattern seems to have been used by several firms”. It certainly is common here, with production by Westmoreland, Degenhart and Boyd. It was also made by Vallerysthal, since some hen-on nest salts appear with their mark inside. We wish we knew more about glass hens being made in England.



The Manley collection also includes freehand salts from the Stourbridge area. One of these was made by Frederick Carder’s brother, George, at a British glass works about 1912 – we’d like to find one like this! Since it is freehand glass, he may have made only one of them. The other freehand ones are a more common style, incorporating several colors of glass and often having “rigaree” as decoration. Our collection has three of them. All have bands of it around the side, which can support the salt in a metal holder. This arrangement is quite common in the salts we have seen, but none of his pictures show any holder.

These two books show salts from other countries which are just like some from the U.S. This leaves us frustrated (again) in establishing where our salts were made and grateful for the relatively large amount of U.S. information we have been able to find. We figure the best answer is to relax and enjoy them for what they are – though this won’t keep us from hunting for more information.

Ed Berg 401 Nottingham Rd., Newark, DE 19711
 DESaltbox@cs.com

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References: “Canadian Handbook of Pressed Glass Tableware”, by Peter and Barbara Sutton-Smith
 “Collectible Glass Book 4 – British Glass”, by Wallace Homestead Book Co.